OCCASIONAL PAPERS □ 5

RECREATION AND ATHLETICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG, 1967-1983: A BRIEF HISTORY

A. Gerald Bedford

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A. Gerald Bedford, a graduate of United College (B.A. Hons.), was born in western Manitoba and has lived almost all his life in the province. He was appointed to the teaching faculty of United in 1946, and except for a two-year period of graduate study (1949-51) has served continuously as a member of the instructional staff, since 1951 as a member of the Department of English. He holds the degrees of M.A. (Manitoba) and Ph.D. (Toronto). His major field of study is Victorian literature, but he has also taught widely in the Renaissance, Seventeenth-century, Neo-classical and Romantic periods of British literature. He is a charter member of the Canadian Council of Teachers of English and the Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada, and has also been a member of the Association of Canadian University Teachers of English since its inception.

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by

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THE ATHLETIC CENTRE: SCOPE AND FACILITIES

The University of Winnipeg's new Recreation and Athletic Centre is one of the finest in North America, in terms of its unique use of space, its adaptability, and its limited over-all physical size. The eight million dollar structure has been carefully designed over a number of years, and adapts many of the most recent facility designs and materials to meet the needs of the University and its surrounding community.

The Centre seeks to fulfil a number of diverse purposes. It contains the finest facilities in the province for basketball and volleyball, two team sports which have become of major importance in Manitoba over the past two decades. It provides access for the special populations to all levels and areas of the building. The Wheelchair Sports Association will have access to this modern physical plant for its programmes and for local as well as national and international competitions. The centre provides clearly separate traffic flow patterns for periods of multi-use, without infringing upon continuing programmes: that is, "user" can be separated from spectator, and classroom student from visitor. It offers separate access to shower and washroom facilities from the playing floor for the performing athlete and from the other activity areas for the participant. It provides an athletic therapy area, with space for rehabilitation and the instruction of the prevention and care of injuries. The centre will accommodate the needs, to a large extent, of the residents of the surrounding community as well as of the University. The complex also contains space for large public gatherings and events, both of an athletic and non-athletic nature, without limiting most recreational and sport activities, and ensures adequate security for all persons and programmes admitted into the complex. It has been designed with an internal third-floor passage-way connection to Centennial Hall and existing University buildings, and the construction will permit convenient internal access to any future building upon its southern exposure.

The Centre rests upon a land area of 210' by 330' (less than one-third a small city block), reaches the equivalent of a full story underground and three stories above, and contains approximately 105,000 square feet. The main entrance is from the east, off Spence Street. Upon entering the complex, there is a short hallway to the right which conducts one to a flight of stairs leading past a central control and storage room downward to the complex of facilities below. Adjacent to it, and leading upward is a second stairway which provides access to the main foyer, or lobby from which the student lounge can be seen to the left. This "overflow" area can accommodate up to 400 people during public events. Moving northward, the visitor arrives at the viewing area which overlooks the great central space (190' x 110'), described as the fieldhouse gymnasium. The gymnasium will accommodate up to three basketball or volleyball courts and has a seating capacity of up to 1,900 when only the central court is in use. This capacity can be increased, with additional temporary seating, to 3,200. The Press Box is immediately below the viewing area and it provides a direct view of activity in the central court of the gymnasium. In addition, the gymnasium includes an elevated fitness-running track (18' above the gymnasium floor) which is 210 yds. in length and approximately 18' wide.

The approach to this viewing area of the gymnasium contains a semi-circle of gently sloping upward steps, which enables the open foyer/lounge area to be utilized as an open theatre if required. The effectiveness and aesthetics of this area are enhanced by its two-storied height,which is covered by a large skylight, and atrium atmosphere. The skylight is designed to prevent natural light from negatively influencing the physical activity areas. Located to the west of the foyer/lounge area are the concession stands and the viewing galleries which look out and down upon two of the four racquet courts (seating accommodation 200) and upon one of the two squash courts (seating accommodation 50). To the east are located public washrooms, a seminar/press room, a classroom and a 75-seat tiered lecture theatre. Adjacent to the main stairway is the elevator. A ticket booth is also located on the east side of the large open foyer/lounge area at the top of the stairway.

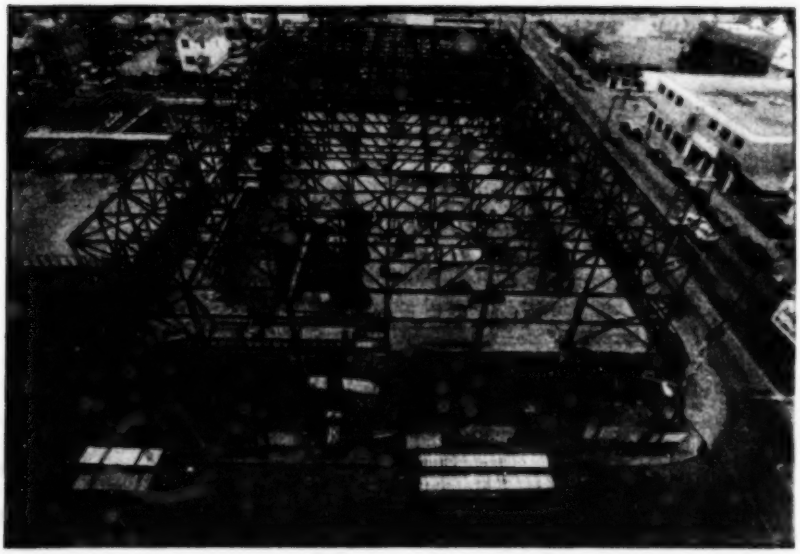

Figure 1. The great gymnasium in an early stage of construction (Sept. 12, 1983) can be seen in this view from Lockhart Hall, looking westward over Spence Street along Ellice Avenue on the right.

Figure 2. Looking north-westward, this picture taken November 8, 1983 catches the entire complex with external contruction partially completed.

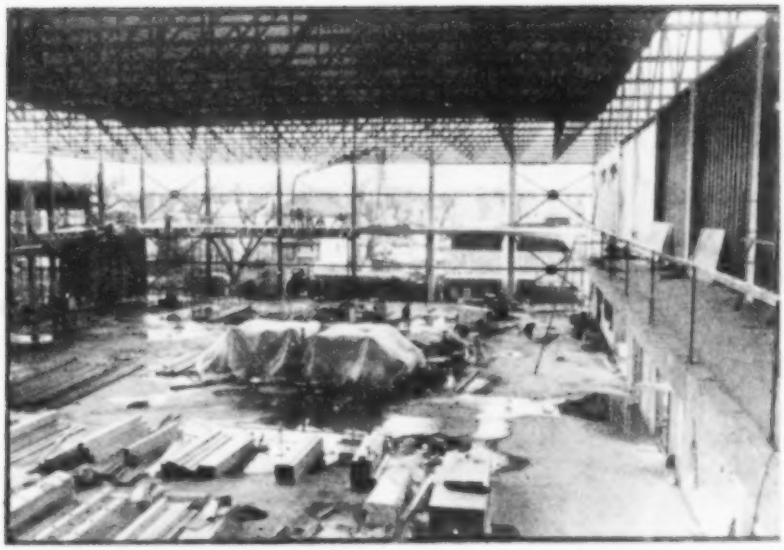

Figure 3. An inside view, looking westward through the gymnasium. The raised jogging track which encircles the auditorium can be clearly seen. The water on the floor created a persistent problem until the roof and walls were completed in early March.

Figure 4. The squash and handball courts as they appeared on March 5, 1984.

The gymnasium level can be reached by descending the central staircase. Access to the gymnasium is gained by following the corridor to the west and around to the north, moving under the racquet court viewing gallery. Moving right along this corridor, the athlete or participant must pass through the revolving barriers in front of the control area and its adjacent small equipment and storage rooms, where access stairs to the basement level are provided. To the front and left of the main entrance foyer, and occupying the space through to the south extremity of the ground floor, are located the major teaching areas for Athletic Studies (Physical Education): a Biomechanics and Anatomy room, a Physiology and Fitness room, a Fat Tank, and smaller rooms designed for specimen study, computer space, and staff and security offices. The entire western wall, to the south of the gymnasium, and to the west of the academic area, is filled with racquet sport courts - four designed for racquetball and two for squash. The eastern portion of this level contains some 16 offices and a meeting room as accommodation for administrative, teaching and support staff, including community recreational personnel.

The athlete or participant would move down to the basement floor by the control centre. On the lowest level, as on the ground floor, there is a corridor immediately to the left after descending the main staircase, or leaving the elevator. Moving to the left (or west), the first corridor is on the left and it leads to the women's area, which includes lockers, showers and sauna, washrooms, staff room, and four team rooms capable of accommodating 500 women. To the right lies the athletic therapy area, which comprises a reception room, an administrative office, an examination room, and rooms for taping, electro therapy, hydro therapy, and storage of various therapy modalities. To the right of the main staircase, in the eastern section of the basement, are located the men's lockers, washrooms, showers and sauna, including a section for faculty members and four team rooms. The men's area can accommodate 800 participants. Along the extreme western side of the basement floor, beyond a main north-south corridor, lies a large double-size combatants' room, or auxiliary gymnasium, designed for wrestling, judo, karate and dance, and a large weight training room.

Finally, in the northern portion of the basement area the underground parking area is located, with space for eighty cars, and with specialized control systems for entrance to and exit from a corridor which leads to the main staircase and elevator.

For the students of the University of Winnipeg, the Centre will be the new home of the "Wesmen" volleyball and basketball teams and all indoor physical recreation and sport activity. For Winnipeg residents, including special populations, the Centre will be a conveniently located downtown recreational complex and a welcome addition to Winnipeg's indoor sports facilities.

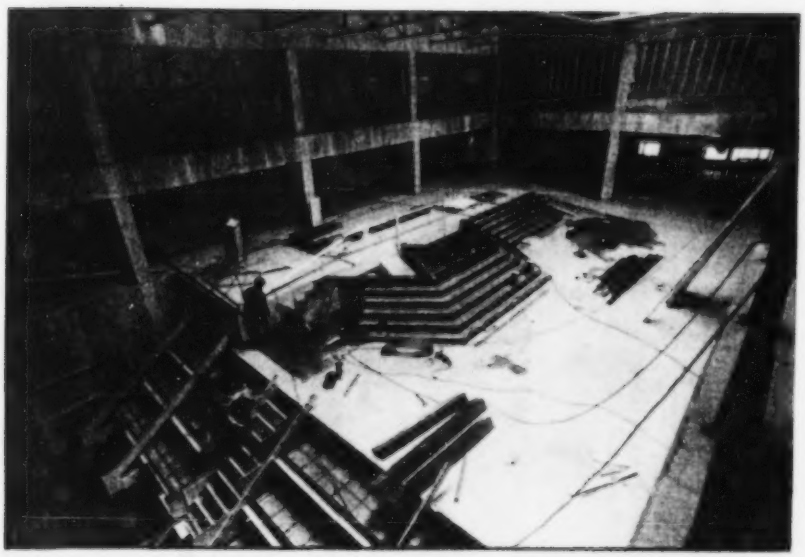

Figure 5. This view, looking down in a north-easterly direction (taken March 5, 1984), shows the steps with viewing-area seats for the handball courts in the foreground, and the upper portion of the gymnasium in the backround.

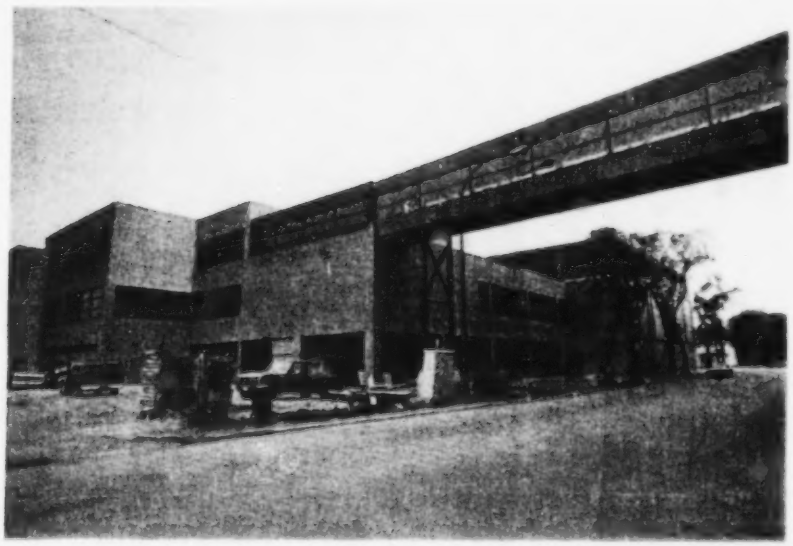

Figure 6. The complex as it appeared on August 7, 1984 from the south-east corner. Spence Street is in the foreground.

Figure 7. (Left)

Barry King, the University's first All-Canadian in Basketball (1973 and 1974) and Athlete of the Year in 1972-73.

Figure 8. (Right)

Janice Hancharyk in action at the net, a Volleyball All-Canadian (1983 and 1984) and a star member of the University's Canadian national championship team, 1982-83 and 1983-84.

RECREATION AND ATHLETICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG, 1967-1983: A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1964 United College, the Winnipeg post-secondary institution that had descended from the two original colleges founded by the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in 1871 and 1888 respectively, found itself standing alone as the sole surviving downtown college in the city. The boom decade of Canadian university growth was well advanced, and United College had shared in the boom both in terms of increased enrolment (from 900 in 1959-60 to 1,600 in 1964-65) and in new campus buildings (Manitoba and Ashdown Halls, 1960, and Riddell and Graham Halls, 1963). Her sister institutions, St. Paul's (Roman Catholic) and St. John's (Anglican), which had with her fostered and shaped the University of Manitoba for almost a century, had vacated their downtown sites and moved to the large central campus on the southern edge of the city in 1958. Partly owing to financial considerations, and partly for traditional reasons, United College had in the same year made the decision, after much soul searching, to remain on its historic location.

The sixties had brought new pressures upon the institution.[1] Its student body was rapidly growing and more and more of its members were clamouring for participation in a greater array of sports activities. The old formula, in which United as an affiliated college of the Provincial University continued to share, obligated its Student Association to contribute from student fees a large sum per student to the central University of Manitoba Student Union (UMSU) coffers for the support of university student activities, activities in which the downtown students found it increasingly difficult to join. It appeared to the United College Students Association (UCSA) Council that the only solution was to withdraw from the UMSU and to use in future all its student funds to support the programmes it offered to its own students. That withdrawal went into effect in 1964-65. United

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1 See Chapter XIII of author's work, *The University of Winnipeg* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1976) for a full discussion of these.

students benefitted as a much larger percentage of students were able to participate in undergraduate activities, particularly sports activities, but they also lost, as they were unable to compete in UMSU intramural leagues. They also had to look elsewhere for inter-varsity competition, and found this only in games against Brandon College and Red River Community College (the brief-lived Tri-College League), and in exhibition games against teams from Western Canada and from neighbouring American Colleges to the south.

There were other pressures, some of which were of far-reaching import. The most significant of these related to the move toward university independence which had already been initiated by the students. Problems created by the distance to the Fort Garry campus and the rapidly increasing enrolment in the University system had raised the almost inevitable view that full academic separation should be negotiated. Administrative discussions began quietly in relation to this possibility. The sudden increase in enrolment in the University system had made for genuine difficulties in the keeping of records, in adequate preparation for the annual sessions, and in the preparation of the annual graduation lists. The rapidly growing number of instructors, who brought new views of teaching methods and examining procedures, were increasingly calling into question the existing "lock-step" system of instruction which had always prevailed in Manitoba. Student pressure for recognition of term work (in contrast to the final examination functioning as the sole determinant of course grades) was also growing. Issues of this sort led to the formation in 1965 of a provincial Council of Higher Learning which was commissioned to plan for the future of higher education in the province.

Another pressure arose from the very location of the college. It had always been a fundamental belief of those who had founded, administered and taught in the institution, and in its forerunners, that the college must serve the community which surrounded it. That community, of course, was the city of Winnipeg, and, in particular, the inner city. Winnipeggers had traditionally wished to be "in" on everything, and the pressure from community groups to share in the development of an urban university campus

was considerable in the early sixties, owing in real measure to the relative scarcity of playgrounds, pools, ice arenas, indoor games' facilities, and auditoriums in the urban area. United College, especially because it had become the only downtown college, felt a strong obligation to meet as many of the needs of its community as possible. Here, then, was yet another pressure it recognized as bearing upon its very limited resources, resources as limited by space (it possessed only a five-acre campus) as by finances.

Thus, there were pressures both internal and external, both academic and general, upon the Board of Regents of the College, all exacerbated by the "shoe-string" budget which had characterized the United Church institution for years. Prior to 1951, when small government grants began to be issued to religious and private Arts and Science institutions as a result of the Massey Commission's report, the College had survived solely through tuition fees and a small annual Church grant; in the years after 1951 rising costs had gradually absorbed the effect of the government grant, and the Board, with new and increased obligations, was in search of a larger financial base.

Sports in the Pre-university Years. It should be noted that up to 1964-65 sports activities had changed little from earlier, pre-war days. "Inter-faculty" sports found students of United College competing against students of other colleges and of the various "Faculties" on the central University of Manitoba campus. Occasionally they found themselves participating on an inter-university team representing the University of Manitoba in the Western Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Association (WCIAA). For the vast majority, however, the "intra-mural" or "house" leagues provided the only activities, and while a surprising number were active in these, facilities were so limited that frustration frequently occurred. Such frustration was keenly felt, partly owing to the unusually strong "school spirit" which had traditionally characterized the institution, both in the days of Wesley College and in the more recent period of United College. This pride in achievement was especially notable during the last half-dozen years in which United students competed in the

University of Manitoba intra-mural system, as evidenced by their performance in the majority of competitions.

For four years beginning in 1958-59.United entrants dominated women's tennis and badminton and their two stars, Ann Murray and Judy Borland, won Canadian titles during that period. United was also a power in both table tennis and men's tennis in the early sixties. In six-man football, the "red and white machine" won three successive titles in 1955-58, and lost in the final in 1960 and 1961. In soccer, United completely dominated the field, losing the final game by a single goal for three successive years, 1957-59, and then winning five successive championships. In their final season, 1963-64, only one goal all season was surrendered by the powerful team. The College won the junior hockey crown in each of its last three seasons and was unbeaten in 1963-64. In swimming the men won four successive titles, beginning in 1956-57 and the women three titles in four years, beginning in 1958-59. Finally, in curling, United entries won the University Bonspiel Championship, a premier distinction, in 1959, 1962 and 1963 under skips John Hofley, Orest Meleschuk, and Rod Hunter, Jr., respectively. The two latter were later to play prominent roles in three Canadian and World championships and in Canadian competitive curling. Another United student of this period, John David Lyon, became the only individual ever to skip a rink in consecutive "Briers" from two different provinces.

New Directions. During the sessions 1964-66, the College Board, keenly aware of the enviable athletic record of United's students, and sensing that the next few years might bring academic independence now that athletic independence had occurred, began to take steps toward the establishment of a full university recreational, physical education and sports programme based upon the Canadian model. The programme was to represent a commitment to quality, perhaps more than to any other single factor, inasmuch as restrictions dictated by the small size of the institution, limited finances, and extremely limited facilities (especially a lack of outdoor facilities) prevented the establishment of a full range

of sports. It was obvious from the beginning, for instance, that no football team could be supported.

The development of the new programme was led by the Principal, Dr. W. C. Lockhart, who brought representatives from the Board of Regents and the Student Association into a special advisory committee. Until 1962, activities in sports and athletics had been organized under a student president, a part-time director, and a faculty adviser, with all three, and especially the two latter, being responsible for schedules, coaching, equipment, and the dispensing of a small budget. In 1962, with the opening of a gymnasium in Riddell Hall, the first full-time director was appointed and a new Athletic Board was established. The first director was Raymond Jauch, who was well-known in the local community as a professional football star with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers until an injury forced him into retirement. The Athletic Board was comprised of the director, representatives from the Board of Regents, the Student Association and the teaching faculty, and it operated with funds provided upon an equal basis by the two former. In its first years, the Board grappled continuously with administrative, fiscal and philosophical conflicts in sports and athletics with its parent University of Manitoba, conflicts which had become almost traditional but which became acute with the sudden burst of enrolments in the sixties. By 1964-65, the first session of athletic independence, Edward Vidruk had succeeded Jauch and the College was beginning to consider a new and more significant commitment.

Early in 1965 the special committee began to give serious attention to its work. The institution had given its blessing to the separation of all activities at the student level, and in view of this, felt an obligation to propose and support a new and continuing quality programme, especially in the area of athletic competition. The committee members were aware of this. They were also aware of the enviable record compiled in the previous decade by United athletes, individually and as teams. It was apparent that the new Tri-College League would not provide top-rate competition, and that more extensive plans were necessary. Those plans were placed in a new perspective

in March, 1966, when Mr. Vidruk resigned in order to pursue further study and the College was forced to advertise for a new Director of Athletics.

A search committee, combining its work with the special committee, interviewed a number of candidates, seeking the advice and views of the latter even as it considered them for the position. By late spring the committee had made its decision, selecting David F. Anderson, a Winnipegger who had studied at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and returned to a post at Gordon Bell High School. Anderson's official appointment began in September, but because of the necessity for thorough planning, he was hired for June, July and August in order to establish, with the advisory committee, criteria and objectives for a new programme.

The original conditions Anderson agreed to were fourfold. First, he was given a full year in which to study the entire Canadian University scene and evaluate the most appropriate manner in which a small college might enter into active competition therein. Second, he was to ensure the continuance of the existent programme within the institution by making it available to as many students as possible, including intra-mural competition, instructional sports and fitness clubs. Third, he was to lay the basis for the establishment of an academic programme in Recreation and Athletic Studies which would be compatible with the aims of a liberal arts institution. Fourth, he was to prepare preliminary concepts for additional recreational-sports facilities on the tiny downtown campus, facilities which would meet both the needs of the current programme and those of predicted enrolment and programme increases.

It was a large order, but Anderson began his new duties with enthusiasm and dedication. Could a small college of just 1,500 students compete, with even a modicum of success, against large and established universities? Further, could an institution dedicated to serving *all* its students at a recreational level find the resources and commitment to field competitive teams? Again, could an institution which also recognized an obligation to provide facilities and assistance to meet the needs of a downtown urban community ever emerge as a recognizable force on the inter-provincial

athletic scene? These and other questions were prominent in the minds of Anderson and the members of the Athletic Board during the 1966-67 academic year, and there were times when it appeared the advisory committee, now disbanded, had proposed too much.

By the conclusion of his first year, Anderson had accomplished a good deal. He had effected some renovations in the Riddell Hall Gymnasium which had permitted a therapy room, much-needed storage space and a small office. His work was complicated by the fact that the underground gymnasium doubled as a theatre and assembly hall whenever events which attracted a large audience were scheduled. More importantly, he had gained the use of some additional subterranean space for an expansion of activities, and now possessed a weight-training and fitness room, a fencing room, and a combatants' room. These areas were undersized but they represented an institutional commitment to space expansion. The local community, chiefly through United graduates and the applications of various clubs, were regularly using the two hand-ball courts and the gymnasium floor at times when heavy student use relaxed. And the latter was heavy, as 60 per cent of the total enrolment was involved in recreational activity on a voluntary basis (an almost unprecedented percentage in Canadian university experience), participating in some twenty different activities.

Progress, however, in a small institution is only possible if cooperation exists on all levels. In the area of improved athletic activities for United College unwavering support was received from the Board, from the administration led by Dr. Lockhart, and from the teaching faculty and the student body. Evidence of the support given by the Board and the administration was the establishment of a new fiscal arrangement for the programme, based upon a recommendation of the director and supported by the president and the Athletic Board. The historical procedure in Canadian universities was to draw funds, usually upon an equal basis, from the administrative operating budget and the student association fees, and this had been the procedure in United, with the administration carrying the added responsibility for the cost of facilities, general administrative

charges and some major equipment. Under the new arrangement the administration became responsible for the full cost of the programme.

This fiscal change (the first of its kind in Canada) was firmly grounded in certain realities. It was recognized by all groups that recreational and athletic services were an integral and necessary part of university life and should be treated in the same fashion as other services to students. Under the former financial basis, the Athletic Board had continually struggled with inconsistent student contributions, delays in agreement owing to student political issues, and almost insurmountable problems in long-term planning owing to the uncertainty of sufficient funds from year to year. With the new system the institution had taken a bold and decisive step to support, upon a solid and continuing basis, one of the most popular areas of student life.

The most significant event which gave impetus to the development of the programme, however, was the fact of complete institutional independence. The Council of Higher Learning, in December 1966, recommended that two of the provincial colleges, Brandon and United, be granted independent status and established as new universities. The result was that on 1 July 1967, United College became the University of Winnipeg, and for student athletics the opportunity and the challenge of full-fledged university competition became real. The first inter-scholastic teams were formed immediately and independent schedules were played with western Canadian and northern United States' universities and colleges, as well as with senior amateur teams in the province. Teams were fielded in basketball, volleyball and fencing (for both men and women), in ice hockey and soccer, and upon a lesser scale in the co-educational sports of badminton, judo and curling.

As early as 1965 preparation began on an application for membership in the Western Canadian Inter-collegiate Athletic Association (WCIAA). The athletic independence of 1965 stimulated long-range planning to establish first-rate competitive opportunities for United's student teams. The events of 1967 brought new significance to that preparation, and the

application was successful in the spring of 1968. Two dissenting votes would have meant defeat, and it was ironical that the single negative vote cast was by the new university's parent, and now sister institution, the University of Manitoba. One can only speculate upon the reasons for the uncharitable vote. Winnipeg joined the Universities of British Columbia, Alberta, Calgary, Saskatchewan and Manitoba in active competition for the 1968-69 season. In subsequent years Victoria, Lethbridge, Regina, Brandon and Lakehead were admitted to the Association, and in 1973 the WCIAA was divided into the Canada West Universities Athletic Association (CWUAA) and the prairie Great Plains Athletic Conference (GPAC). For Winnipeg, full membership in the Canadian Inter-collegiate Athletic Union (CIAU) followed in the spring of 1969.

It was apparent to the Athletic Board, as the new era of competition opened, that the University of Winnipeg's emphasis must be upon quality rather than quantity, due to limited facilities and finances and a continuing strong commitment to full recreational activities for all students and use of university facilities, where feasible, by the local community. This meant that a football team would not be fielded. The major competitive sports would be basketball and volleyball (for both men and women), ice hockey and soccer. An attempt was made to secure the finest coaches available, and the first appointments were Vic Pruden in men's and women's basketball, followed by Bruce Enns in men's in 1974: Wezer Bridle in men's volleyball, succeeded by Dennis Nord in 1974: and Thomas Marshall in ice hockey. In addition, Juan Gomez Perales, a notable fencing master, became the fencing coach for a dozen years and Bruce Hudson, a two-time provincial champion agreed to give instruction in curling.

Competitive Successes. In the competitive area, success came slowly, but it came. It came first in men's volleyball where, in its third season, Wezer Bridle's team captured the national championship at Mount Allison in 1971. This was followed by a long period of dominance in GPAC and four more national titles, in 1972, '73, '74 and in 1977. Many members

of these teams represented Canada in international, World Cup and Olympic competition, such as Garth Pishke, Don Michalski, Bob Harrison, Larry Plenart, Ed Alexiuk, and Dennis Nord. Two players, Boris Tysuk and James Mathews were also to win Rhodes Scholarships, in 1974 and 1976, indicative of the academic quality which Winnipeg consistently demanded of its athletes.

The University's volleyball teams remained close to the top of GPAC play in the seasons after 1977 in men's play, but in the women's division the climb to a championship was a long and slow process, and it was not until 1981-82 that a GPAC title was claimed under the coaching of Mike Burchuk. The next season, however, the girls repeated their performance and went on to triumph in the national play-offs led by All-Canadians Ruth Klassen and Jamie Hancharyk. In March 1984, the team again won the national title with Hancharyk (again) and Linda Tataryn as All-Canadians. Late in 1983, Jamie Hancharyk was named Manitoba's "Female Athlete of the Year" and in each of the two previous seasons she was selected as "Most Valuable Player" of the championship series. The breakthrough had finally come, and on the coaching level as well, as Mike Burchuk was voted "Coach of the Year" in three successive seasons, 1981, '82, and '83.

The most consistent success for Winnipeg teams, however, was achieved in women's basketball, and nowhere was the emphasis upon quality and expert coaching more apparent. The "Lady Wesmen" captured their first GPAC title in 1972, their fifth season in competitive play, and thereafter, with the exception of 1972 when they were edged in the final by Manitoba, they have completely dominated the league. In 1984 they swept to their eleventh consecutive championship. In the national play-offs they have been less successful, failing to win a CIAU crown as again and again another university would field an unusually strong entry and take the title, as in March of 1984 when they were edged in the Canadian final by Bishop's University. But the dominance of the "Lady Wesmen" has earned them long-standing recognition as one of Canada's great teams; tradition has been built around their name, and All-Canadians have included the peerless Angie Johnson (twice),

Dori McPhail, Donna Posnick (twice), and Debbie Steele. Much of the credit for the basketball success must go to Vic Pruden who proved to be one of the nation's finest coaches. After the 1978-79 season he elected to retire from the University of Winnipeg scene, in the belief that he had accomplished all he could in his special area. His successor, Thomas Kendall, proceeded to preserve the winning pattern, ringing up five more GPAC titles by the spring of 1984 and receiving national coaching honours in 1981-82.

The University of Manitoba "Bisons" had long been dominant in men's basketball and for some years after Winnipeg's admission to inter-collegiate play they continued to field strong teams. It quickly became a major challenge for the team from the new university to defeat their cousins from the much larger institution across town, and great interest began to centre upon their clashes. Winnipeg, until the mid-seventies, experienced difficulty in their games with Manitoba, despite the fact that in both 1967 and 1969 they won their own December invitational tournament in which the Bisons were competitors. The tournament, inaugurated in 1967 and known as the "Golden Boy Classic" until 1975 when it became known as the "Wesmen Classic", includes the strongest university teams in Canada each year and has now long been recognized as the finest invitational basketball tournament in the nation. It was staged in the Winnipeg Arena for its first three years and thereafter in the spacious Winnipeg Convention Centre, owing to the lack of suitable space on the small Winnipeg campus. The "Classic," from its beginning, included a division for the best local boys' and girls' High School teams, and in 1980 a University Women's section was added.

By the late seventies the Wesmen were finally beginning to play with greater consistency and growing confidence, and by 1977-78 it was rare for the Bisons to win in games between the city rivals. Wesmen won their "Classic" in both 1978 and 1979, and in the 1978-79 season they finally captured the GPAC championship. They have yet to win a national crown but in recent years they have made five appearances in the CIAU play-offs. Bruce Enns, who has been at the helm since 1974 and who was selected "Coach of the Year" in 1977-78, can look back with pride upon a decade of steady progress toward the top. Wesmen again won the December "Classic" in 1982,

in a re-building season, placed second to Brandon in 1983 and 1984 in GPAC play-offs, and on their record were awarded a place in the CIAU championship series in 1984. Individual All-Canadian awards have gone to Barry King, Kenneth Opalko and Belaigh Deguefe during Enns' tenure.

Ice hockey has been a different story and in this sport the Wesmen have seldom had a complement of top-level players or players with genuine potential. Only once, in 1971-72, did they win a GPAC title, and since then they have all too frequently been the cellar-dwellers. A renewed commitment to the revitalization of the hockey programme began in earnest in 1980, however, and this drive toward a more competitive hockey team involved the administration, the coaching staff and many former players. It should be noted, though, that the lack of an ice facility on campus and the relatively small size of the institution continue to hamper the development of a strong programme. For a half dozen seasons Winnipeg soccer teams continued to win, as had those in the United College period, and in such minor sports as curling, its representatives performed with distinction. Limited financial resources, however, forced GPAC to drop soccer and by 1976 curling, women's field hockey, judo and badminton had also been removed from competitive athletic schedules. Winnipeg continued with its independent fencing programme until 1979.

Reasons for Success. Many observers of the CIAU marvel at the record the University of Winnipeg has achieved. How could such a small institution, with no outdoor facilities and only a limited-size gymnasium not only compete upon a national level in the major sports of basketball and volleyball but also become a CIAU power in these areas? The answer lies partly in school spirit, partly in the dedication of those students who succeeded in "making" the teams, partly in the staunch support which the administration and the teaching faculty gave to its teams from the beginning, but chiefly and most importantly it lies in the superb quality of the coaching. This was the emphasis set by the University in 1967 and it is now apparent that it has succeeded. Quality coaching is of especial importance in a small institution which offers courses only in Arts, Science and Education,

for, coupled with the fact that enrolment is small is the fact that significant numbers of students who possess natural athletic abilities are usually attracted to other, more immediately practical programmes. Winnipeg, therefore, has always had relatively few students from which to choose, and has relied upon the capacity of its coaching staff to develop those who were chosen to play. Its teams, as a result, have been noted for team-work rather than for individual performances.

Recreational Programmes and Facilities. Competitive sport, however, although it caught the attention of the public and the press, was in the view of the total University community and the city it serves, almost the least significant aspect of the work in Physical Recreation and Athletics. The development of programmes for all students, and of recreational facilities for the wider community, are of paramount importance. And in order to function effectively it was painfully obvious by the early seventies, that new facilities were essential, especially a fieldhouse. Some 1,300 regular-session students per year (approximately half the total enrolment) were served by inter-house programmes during the sixties as the new university experienced slow enrolment growth, and when this number rose to 1,650, with an increase in activities from 15 to 20, total capacity had been reached. A falling participation percentage was inevitable, and the future of the entire programme was placed in jeopardy. Prompted by this awareness, an internal and community study was launched in 1971 and upon the basis of its results a formal submission was made in 1973 to the Universities Grants Commission requesting capital funding for a Recreation and Sports Complex. The response was positive, and a year later initial approval was given for land acquisition, at a cost of approximately 1.2 million dollars; in 1976 approval for preliminary architectural selection and design followed. Then, just when a building grant seemed about to be realized the provincial government placed a freeze upon capital grants, a freeze which remained in force until 1982. During those years the University's problem increased annually. After 1978 little or no increase was possible in the number of students participating, yet enrolments

continued to grow steadily. The inevitable fall in participation percentage occurred (from 61 per cent in 1975 to 45 per cent in 1982) and, of course, little real expansion was possible in service to the general community. But service was given, through careful and full scheduling, to a surprisingly large number of organizations. By 1982, twenty-three non-University groups were making regular use of University facilities, including such public agencies and groups as provincial associations in the various major sports, Winnipeg High School leagues, referee's associations and government-sponsored federations. These groups were afforded court time for tournaments and for recreation programmes, space for clinics and meetings, and professional assistance from the University's own staff.

Academic Programmes. On the third front, the area of academic courses in Sport and Recreation, Dr. Anderson was also busy. He was able to begin offering courses in 1972 in the Faculty of Arts and Science and to introduce a "Major" in Recreation and Athletic Studies within the B.Ed. programme in 1974. Total professional staff, including both those in "Services" and in "Studies," had risen to fourteen by 1980, and they were continually assisted by a number of local part-time individuals who contributed enormously to programme development.

The Complex. Throughout the years of development, one great need hovered continually over the entire athletic programme, and that, of course, was the Recreation and Sports Complex. After the financial freeze of 1975, the University moved from year to year in hope and expectation, and continually its officials raised the matter in budget requests, formal petitions and committee presentations. In this respect the president, Dr. H. E. Duckworth (1971-81) was unwavering in his efforts to bring the building into being and he received staunch support from such individuals as D. F. Anderson, the Director; R. O. A. Hunter, a chairman of both the Athletic Board and the Board of Regents and later Chancellor (1978-84); W. Regehr and E. T. Revel, who also served as Athletic Board chairmen; J. Clake, Dean (1968-78) and Vice-President (from 1978); and J. G. Pincock, assistant to the president (until 1980). Designs were drawn and redrawn, accommodated to rising costs, new developments in facility design, and

priority items in programme alteration. Discussions were opened with community organizations as the University sought to create the best possible facility for the citizens of the inner city core, whom they consistently felt obligated to serve, within the restrictions placed upon it by cost and space. Finally in 1982, the government announced that funds were available for capital expansion for the University of Winnipeg, and in December the sod was turned for the 7.9 million dollar addition.

The complex itself promises to be one of the most significant and unique urban sports facilities in North America. It was designed by R. Kirby, I. Coop and Associates of Number Ten Architectural Group of Winnipeg and may well become a model for future urban recreation structures. The relatively small Centre has been carefully planned to fulfil a large number of functions. First, of course, it must fulfil the needs of the University's programmes in recreation, athletics and academic offerings, both currently and in the immediate future. Coupled with this, it is designed to serve some of the specific, yet often wide-ranging recreational and athletic needs of the general community, including the needs of the physically and mentally handicapped who wish to engage in sports programmes. Great ingenuity had to be exercised in designing a single building in a small urban setting which would meet these various needs with some degree of satisfaction. If area had been available, large community-use spaces could have been placed upon the ground floor, as in many suburban campuses. But in the Winnipeg situation, the plan had to "go up," not outward, and with just a single main entrance; it had to establish clearly separate traffic flow patterns for multi-use without infringing upon continuing programmes: that is, it had to separate the "user" from the spectator, the visitor and the classroom student; it had to provide separate access to shower and washroom facilities from the playing floor for the athlete and from the activity areas for the participants; it had to provide space for large public gatherings and events, both of an athletic and non-athletic nature, without limiting most recreational and sport activities; and it had to permit adequate security for all persons and programmes admitted into the complex. Finally, always a requisite in architectural endeavours, the result was expected to aesthetically satisfying.

It is hoped that the new complex will serve to meet the immediate needs of the University and some of those of the core-area residents of the city. As a joint University-community effort, it has been designed to allow for future expansion if such becomes feasible and desirable. In the meantime, it will undoubtedly unite the urban University of Winnipeg even more closely to its community and enable it to fulfil its historical obligations with increased efficiency and effectiveness.

With progress came changes within the University's formal programme. D. F. Anderson resigned as director in 1981, after devoting fifteen years to the building of a department which had achieved enviable successes in serving its students and its community and an astounding record in inter-collegiate team competition. With Dr. Anderson's move to full-time teaching, A. Ferris became Director of Recreation and Athletic Services and T. Kendall Coordinator of Recreation and Athletic Studies.

The Past and Future Meet. The small urban University is moving into the mid-eighties with confidence in its future, faith in its athletic coaches, and pride in its achievement both at home in the community and nationally in the CIAU. Its athletic department has demonstrated that a small institution, housed in extremely limited space in the heart of a modern city, can successfully fulfil a number of diverse aims and still compete successfully on a national level. In 1983, as the winter session closed, four of its five intercollegiate teams were ranked among the top ten in Canada and a year later had retained these rankings. Its record over the past fifteen years speaks for itself. It has accumulated twenty-seven GPAC championships, more than any other member; it has captured seven national titles, which places it ninth among forty-two universities in that time span; its teams have made thirty-five appearances in national CIAU championships, placing it seventh in that category; and it has had five coaches and eighteen players awarded "All-Canadian" status. The dream of 1967, to afford its students the opportunity of competing upon an equal basis with those of older, great Canadian universities has been achieved; the method of placing emphasis upon quality, particularly at the coaching level, in the few sports which could be accommodated in the tiny

campus in 1967, proved to be eminently successful. The University of Winnipeg, in 1984, has shown that there is a place on the national intercollegiate sports scene for the small urban institution.

A NOTE ON SOURCES

There normally exist a number of sources for events of recent history, including one's own memory, and this is indeed true for the foregoing brief survey of sports and recreation in the University of Winnipeg. I wish to express my thanks, however, to the University officers who granted me access to files of the Department of Recreation and Athletics, to the annual reports prepared for the Athletic Board by the Director and to the minutes of the meetings of the Athletic Board and of the Board of Regents of the University. The official programmes of the "Wesmen Classic" (formerly the "Golden Boy Classic") were useful in determining the accuracy of certain dates, as was the University of Winnipeg Sports Magazine (1983) and the issues of *Vox* from 1950 onwards. In addition, I reviewed the material in a number of sources I had consulted earlier in the preparation of *The University of Winnipeg: A History of the Founding Colleges* (Toronto, 1976). The University photographer, Mr. Peter Tittenberger, supplied numerous photographs for selection and Professor Aubrey Ferris kindly arranged, in late February, for me to join one of his tours of the partially completed new Complex, in order that I might inspect it during the construction process. Finally, I am, above all, most indebted to Dr. David F. Anderson, who first asked me to prepare the pamphlet, who provided a great many of the names and dates mentioned, who helped select the pictures, and who carefully verified the accuracy of many of the finer details contained in the article.

Figure 9. (Left)

Peerless Angie Johnson, perhaps the finest of the Lady Wesmen Basketball stars, an All - Canadian (twice), the University's Athlete of the Year in 1972-73, and member of the Canadian national team, 1975.

Figure 10. (Right)

Kenneth Opalko, a leader of the Wesmen Basketball squad and an All-Canadian (1979), in action in the "Wesmen Classic" in December, 1978.

Figure 11. The University's first national championship team - Men's Volleyball, 1970-71. Front row, from left to right: Bob Urquhart, Robert Rogers, Jan Kreutzer, Dennis Nord. Back row: Don Rischuk, Corny Loewen, Bob Harrison, Bob Syko, Denton Booth, Rod Fowler, Walter "Rusty" Rischuk, "Wez" Bridle (Coach).

Figure 12. The University's most recent national championship team - Women's Volleyball, 1983-84. Front row, from left to right: Allison Smith, Terri Starsiak, Sharon Derksen, Jamie Hancharyk, Bernice Bowley. Back row: Mike Burchuk (Coach), Diane Scott, Linda Tataryn, Brenda Boroski, Jo-Anne Marcoux, Doris Wiebe, Ken Bentley (Coach).

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